



PRESS RELEASE - For immediate release

FREENOM RELAUNCHES THE NATIONAL TOP LEVEL DOMAIN OF EQUATORIAL GUINEA

.GQ domains will soon be globally available at no cost

Amsterdam - 1st of October 2014. Freenom relaunched the .GQ top level domain - the domain extension of Equatorial Guinea - and will deploy its innovative business model to give .GQ domains away for free. Freenom has partnered with GETESA, the largest telecommunication operator in Equatorial Guinea and a joint venture with Orange, to relaunch GQ in various stages. Before .GQ domains are available for free to the general public on December 1st, trademark holders and trademark agencies have their first pick in the GQ Sunrise Period that has started today.

From December 1st onwards free GQ domains will be offered to all internet users in Equatorial Guinea and internationally. There will be no restrictions to registrations of free domains and anyone can claim their own .GQ domain. Free .GQ domains will work exactly like any other extension and can be renewed an unlimited number of times at no charge.

"The need for free domains continues to grow exponentially", says Joost Zuurbier, CEO at Freenom. "Especially in countries like Brazil, Russia, Vietnam and China, we see the demand for new domains is growing and growing. We are happy to announce that we have opened up more domain space to fulfill these needs."

Freenom has already partnered with four nations and has become the largest country code domain registry operator worldwide with more than 28 million active domains under management. Equatorial Guinea is the latest country code to add to the list of Tokelau, Mali, Gabon and Central African Republic. Tokelau's .TK, the first extension to have offered free domains, is today the largest country code in the world with over 26 million active domains and represents 20% of all country code domain registrations.

Following the success of .TK, Freenom has opened its model to other nations eager to develop their top level domain and looking for an alternative to the unprofitable pay-per-year model. By leapfrogging the traditional approach and offering free domains, they are able to create an immediate impact on their digital landscape and empower their internet users to build an online identity at no cost.

"Free domains make a lot of sense in countries where the banking penetration is in the single digit range", continues Joost Zuurbier. "The demand for free domains is enormous because people in those nations may not have a credit card to buy domains, but they do have a profound need to communicate and build their presence online. Free domains are an important catalyst that directly enable local content creation and internet entrepreneurship."

To support its African partners, Freenom opened an office in Dakar in 2013 and will continue to grow its operations in Senegal. Most African countries have been traditionally very weak in the domain name space, but its increasing technology-savvy population and modernizing digital landscape make it the perfect place for the free domain model. Just as free SIM cards and prepaid phones have revolutionized communications, free domains can dramatically change how African internet users are represented online.

In Equatorial Guinea, GETESA sees free .GQ domains as an opportunity to empower young internet users and help them embrace their digital flag. Through GQ free domains they will be able to create websites and learn about technology.

Freenom's experience and technology will directly benefit the local internet community of Equatorial Guinea, who will be able to enjoy a modern platform and unlimited domains at no cost. Together with GETESA and in line with ICANN's bottom-up multi-stakeholder model, the partnership will ensure that the .GQ extension is accessible to all internet users.

About Freenom: Freenom is a Registry Operator for top level domains. With a secure and stable DNS AnyCast Cloud, fast registration system and unique business model built around free domain names Freenom provides a complete solution for all top level domains. Freenom operates more than 28 million active domain names and is the largest Registry Operator after .COM. Freenom is headquartered in Amsterdam, Netherlands and has satellite offices in Palo Alto (U.S.A.) and Dakar (Senegal).

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www.freenom.com

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